

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY EC DATA ON 1977 CROP AREA

REF: EC BRUSSELS 705

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: BASED ON PRELIMINARY AND INCOMPLETE
DATA, THE EC
STATISTICAL OFFICE FORESEES DROPS OF 2 PERCENT IN WHEAT
AND SUGARBEET SOWINGS; HOWEVER, AN INCREASE IN WINTER RYE
AND BARLEY SOWINGS OF
4 TO 5 PERCENT IS EXPECTED. THE DECLINE IN WHEAT AREA IS
DUE PRIMARILY TO A SHARP DROP IN THE AREA SOWN WITH WHEAT
IN NORTHERN ITALY. THE EC'S STATISTICAL OFFICE HAS REVISED
ITS ESTIMATE OF 1976 GRAIN PRODUCTION TO 90.5 MILLION
M.T., UP MORE THAN A MILLION TONS FROM THEIR JANUARY EST-
IMATE. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE EC'S STATISTICAL OFFICE HAS JUST RELEASED A REPORT
CONTAINING A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF 1977 CROP CONDITIONS
IN THE COMMUNITY, AS WELL AS REVISED ESTIMATES OF THE 1976
CROP. THEIR ESTIMATE FOR 1976 GRAIN
PRODUCTION (EXCLUDING RICE) IS NOW 90.5 MILLION M.T. - UP 1.2
MILLION TONS FROM THEIR JANUARY ESTIMATE (REFTEL). THE REPORT
INDICATES THAT FINAL FIGURES HAVE BEEN OBTAINED ONLY FOR DENMARK,

ITALY, THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM. THE LATEST ESTIMATES OF EC GRAIN PRODUCTION ARE AS FOLLOWS (MILLION M.T.):
WHEAT 39.2, OF WHICH SOFT WHEAT 35.6 AND DURUM WHEAT 3.6; RYE 2.9; BARLEY 29.8; OATS 7.1; CORN 11.3 AND RICE .74. THE REPORT ALSO ESTIMATES 1976 POTATO AND SUGARBEET PRODUCTION AT 29.1 AND 75.9 MILLION M.T. RESPECTIVELY.

3. THE REPORT INDICATES THAT SOWING OF GRAINS IN CERTAIN AREAS OF FRANCE, ITALY AND THE UK HAS BEEN HELD UP AS A RESULT OF EXCESSIVELY WET SOIL. HOWEVER, THE CONDITION OF WINTER GRAINS CAN BE CHARACTERIZED AS GOOD TO SATISFACTORY. WHILE IT IS NOT YET POSSIBLE TO ACCURATELY ESTIMATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH DECLINES IN WINTER GRAIN AREA WILL BE COMPENSATED FOR BY INCREASED SOWING OF SUMMER GRAINS, THE REPORT SUGGESTS THAT DECLINES OF 2 PERCENT IN WHEAT AND SUGARBEET AREA MAY OCCUR WITH INCREASES OF 4 TO 5 PERCENT IN WINTER RYE AND BARLEY AREA.

4. THE SITUATION BY COUNTRY IS REPORTED AS FOLLOWS:

- GERMANY: THE FOLLOWING PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN COMPARISON WITH 1976 CROP AREAS ARE ESTIMATED AS OF THE END OF FEBRUARY 1977: WHEAT -2 PERCENT; WINTER RYE PLUS 4 PERCENT; BARLEY PLUS 4 PERCENT; OATS - 4 PERCENT; CORN FOR GRAIN PLUS 9 PERCENT; TOTAL GRAIN PLUS 1 PERCENT;
POTATOES - 1 PERCENT; SUGARBETS NO CHANGE; WINTER RAPE PLUS 17 PERCENT. THE CONDITIONS OF WINTER WHEAT AND WINTER RYE WERE DESCRIBED AS GOOD TO SATISFACTORY.

- FRANCE: FORECAST OF AREAS UNDER CULTIVATION AS OF FEBRUARY 1,
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1977 WERE: (1976 FIGURES IN PARENTHESES)

WHEAT 4.27 MILLION HA. (4.29)
BARLEY 2.8 MILLION HA. (2.75)
WINTER RAPESEED 284,000 HA. (294,000 HA).

WINTER GRAINS ARE SAID TO BE GENERALLY SATISFACTORY WHILE EXCESSIVELY WET SOIL HAS DELAYED SPRING SOWING.

- ITALY: A DROP OF ABOUT 20 PERCENT IN THE AREA SOWN TO WHEAT IN NORTHERN ITALY IS ANTICIPATED, AS A RESULT OF CLIMATIC CONDITIONS, A CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN CORN AREA IS ANTICIPATED.

- NETHERLANDS: AREAS CULTIVATED IN 1977 ARE EXPECTED TO BE THE SAME OR SLIGHTLY GREATER FOR WINTER WHEAT, SOMEWHAT GREATER FOR POTATOES AND SOMEWHAT LOWER FOR SUGARBEET AND RAPESEED.

- BELGIUM: THE MID-DECEMBER CROP SURVEY INDICATES THE FOLLOWING AREAS SOWN FOR WINTER GRAINS: WINTER WHEAT 0.16 MILLION HA.

(DOWN FROM 0.19 MILLION HA. IN 1976); WINTER RYE 18,000 HA;
WINTER BARLEY 0.12 MILLION HA. (UP FROM 0.10 MILLION HA.
IN 1976).

- UK: AS A RESULT OF EXCESSIVELY WET CONDITIONS, THE AREAS
ACTUALLY SOWN WITH GRAINS ARE NOW EXPECTED TO BE CONSIDERABLY
BELOW EARLIER ESTIMATES OF 3.15 MILLION HA; POTATO AREA IS
ESTIMATED TO DECLINE BY 2 PERCENT WHILE SUGARBEET AREA SHOULD
BE ABOUT THE SAME AS IN 1976. A 20 PERCENT INCREASE IN RAPE-
SEED AREA IS EXPECTED.

- DENMARK: AS OF FEBRUARY 18, 1977 THE AREA SOWN FOR WINTER WHEAT
AND WINTER RYE WAS ESTIMATED AT 99,000 AND 82,000 HA. RES-
PECTIVELY (COMPARED WITH 101,000 HA. FOR WINTER WHEAT AND 67,000
HA. FOR WINTER RYE IN 1976). THE REPORT NOTES THAT PART OF
THE WINTER RYE MAY BE CUT FOR SILAGE.HINTON

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